

COUNTY OF SOMERSET.

CHARD RURAL DISTRICT.


A N N U A L R E P O R T

- OF THE -

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1 9 3 7 .



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CHARD RURAL DISTRICT.

- in the -

COUNTY OF SOMERSET.ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR ENDED31ST. DECEMBER, 1937.PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS:

Medical Officer of Health (part time employed), -
C. C. Court, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector (fully employed), -
E. Whisker, M.S.I.A.

TO: THE CHARD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report of the Sanitary Conditions and Vital Statistics of Chard Rural District for the Year ended 31st December, 1937.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

There has been little change in the conditions of living in the area during the Year under review. There was rather less employment amongst males owing to the completion of pipe laying contracts. Female labour was still in general demand in the factories of the local towns and elsewhere.

There are no unhealthy occupations in the area.

STATISTICAL MEMORANDA.

Area of District.....54,600 acres.
Population (Estimated Mid. 1937).....11,110.
Number of inhabited Houses..... 3,300.
Rateable Value..... £36,813.
Sum represented by a penny rate..... £165 (net).

VITAL STATISTICS.

	Total.	Male.	Female.	<u>Birth Rate per 1000 population.</u>
Live Births:				
Legitimate.	131	67	64	12.2
Illegitimate.	5	5	-	
Total	136	72	64	
Still Births:				
Legitimate.	11	8	3	<u>Rate per 1000 total (Live and Still) births.</u>
Illegitimate.	-	-	-	
	11	8	3	
				74.8

The Birth rate is again lower than in the preceding year, and is 12.2 per 1,000 as compared to 14.9 for England and Wales.

Deaths:

	Total.	Male.	Female.	Death Rate per 1000 population.
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
All causes:	189	100	89	17.01
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Causes of Death:

Diseases of the Liver.....	1	-	1	Death rate after multiplying with Comparability Factor for comparison with Registrar-General's figures for England and Wales - 13.9 per 1000 population Registrar-General's figure for England and Wales is 12.4 per 1000.
Digestive Diseases.....	1	-	1	
Acute & Chronic Nephritis.....	6	4	2	
Congenital Debility & Premature Birth.....	8	6	2	
Senility.....	18	3	15	
Suicide.....	6	6	-	
Other Violence.....	9	8	1	
Other defined Diseases.....	11	6	5	
Diabetes.....	2	1	1	
Cerebral Haemorrhage.....	6	1	5	
Circulatory Diseases.....	6	4	2	
Bronchitis.....	7	6	1	
Pneumonia.....	10	4	6	
Diarrhoea under 2 years.....	1	1	-	
Influenza.....	15	8	7	
Respiratory Tuberculosis.....	3	2	1	
Other Tuberculosis.....	1	-	1	
G. P. I. Tabes.....	1	-	1	
Cancer.....	30	15	15	
Heart Disease.....	47	25	22	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
Total	189	100	89	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	

The Death rate is unusually high for the year. I account for this by the fact that an Influenza Epidemic was wide spread during the early months of the year, which had it's effect in lowering the vitality of many old people. It will be noted that Heart Disease is still the most frequent cause of death, but that Cancer is the next most common cause.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year:

Legitimate.....	11	8	3
Illegitimate.....	-	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	11	8	3
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Death rate of Infants per 1,000 Live Births. 80.8

Deaths of Infants under 1 year divided as follows:-

Under one week.....	5
1 - 4 weeks.....	3
1 - 6 months.....	2
6 - 12 months.....	1
	<hr/>
Total under 1 year.....	11
	<hr/>

Deaths from Measles - all ages.....nil.
Deaths from Whooping Cough.....nil.
Deaths from Diarrhoea - under 2 years..... 1.
Deaths from Puerperal Sepsis.....nil.

The year 1937 was an unusual one as regards disease. There was a very wide spread Epidemic of Influenza in the first two months of the year. The case incidence was very high, few households or individuals escaping. The chief symptoms were respiratory catarrh with much cough. There were a number of cases of Bronchitis and Broncho-pneumonia, chiefly among old people and children as a sequelae, but in consideration of the number of cases which occurred the mortality from Influenza was not high. There is no doubt, however, that this disease led to a distinct increase in the death rate, especially from heart affections, owing to the toxic effect of the Influenza infection in persons already in poor health from chronic diseases, old age etc. This epidemic was more generalised than any of the Influenza outbreaks which have occurred in this area during the fifteen years I have held the post of Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

These still remain as in my previous reports for the most part.

There is now a Motor Ambulance Service in the adjoining towns of Chard and Crewkerne available for the District.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supplies -

During the year samples have been taken at frequent intervals from the Council's public supplies for bacteriological examination, including samples taken from the source of the new Regional Scheme at Dommett Farm, and from the new Tatworth and Forton (Chard Parish) Scheme, and also from the under-mentioned village supplies belonging to the Council, viz:-

Buckland St. Mary;
 Chaffcombe;
 Combe St. Nicholas;
 Winsham.

Except in the case of the Regional Scheme referred to below the reports were satisfactory in all cases.

Samples were also taken from the under-mentioned supplies not belonging to the District Council, viz:-

<u>Parish.</u>	<u>Owners of Supply.</u>	<u>Date of examination.</u>	<u>Report.</u>
Chard Parish (Perry Street area).	Messrs. J. C. Small & Tidmas Ltd.	23/2/37.	No evidence of contamination and the results are satisfactory.
Hinton St. George.	Hinton St. George Estates Company.	13/10/37.	No evidence of contamination and the results are satisfactory.

A number of samples were also taken from privately-owned wells in various parts of the District.

Water Supplies (Continued).

New Schemes:

- (1) The Regional Scheme for supplying the northern half of the District comprising 12 parishes and affording a bulk supply to the Langport Rural District was completed during the year.

Some supplies were commenced with water obtained from the Ilminster Urban District Council's reservoir on or about 3rd June, 1937, but it was not until 14th October, 1937, that water was available from this Council's source at Dommett Farm, Buckland St. Mary. The supply therefrom would have been commenced earlier but on analysis the water was found to be contaminated through the collecting area having been open to cattle until a short time previously, and plant for chlorinating the water was installed. Samples have been frequently taken and analysed by the County Analyst, and the chlorinating of the water has been kept under observation almost daily.

Since the full scheme was brought into operation on 14th October, 1937, the supply for this District and the bulk supply to the Langport Rural District has been maintained from this Council's source at Dommett Farm without a supplementary supply from the Ilminster Urban Council's reservoir.

- (2) Tatworth and Forton, Chard Parish: This scheme was completed in June, 1937, and is proving entirely satisfactory.

A large quantity of water has been taken by the Wilts United Dairies Ltd., at their new Butter Factory at Chard Junction, varying from about 15,000 gallons per day to 60,000 galls. per day during a short period in May - June.

- (3) Hewish, West Crewkerne: Scheme approved and loan of £950 sanctioned 19th October, 1937. The works were then commenced and have been completed since the end of the year, viz: in February, 1938.

A sample of the water from the source has been reported by the County Analyst as showing no evidence of contamination.

- (4) Roundham, West Crewkerne:
Clapton, Do.

Schemes for supplying these hamlets are under consideration.

Supervision of Supplies:

Including the schemes referred to above the Council have provided piped water supplies to 21 parishes out of a total of 30, and the Sanitary Inspector has been made responsible for the management of all the water undertakings, acting in close co-operation with the Medical Officer of Health. A competent fitter has been engaged as Waterworks Bailiff to supervise connections, etc., and to assist in the maintenance of the undertakings under the direction of the Sanitary Inspector.

Rivers and Streams.

There has been no excessive pollution of Rivers and Streams in the area during the past year.

Drainage and Sewerage:

Misterton.

A scheme for improving the sewage disposal works, including the provision of new rotary filters, prepared by Messrs. Parker Pearson & Ross Hooper, Consulting Engineers, was submitted to the Ministry of Health in December, 1936, and on 25th February, 1937, a visit was made to the outfall by an Engineering Inspector from the Ministry. The estimated cost of this scheme was £1300, and the Ministry on 30th March, 1937, notified the Council that consent to borrow this amount would be given.

Considerable improvement has, however, been effected by some re-construction of the tanks etc., carried out under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector at a cost of about £30, and the Ministry have offered no objection to the scheme prepared by the Consulting Engineers being deferred for the time being.

Winsham.

In June, 1937, a complaint was received from the owner-occupier of the land on to which the sewage from the village has been discharged under licence for many years. The Council arranged to purchase a portion of the field, 1.679 acre, and when the purchase was completed in October, 1937, this area was fenced off and a new tank and irrigation channels etc., constructed at a cost of about £155.

Chard Parish.

Proposals for the provision of sewers in the Tatworth, Southchard and Perry Street area of Chard Parish with an outfall near Chard Junction, total estimated cost £6,735, were submitted to the Ministry of Health in February, 1937, and an Inquiry was held on 21st May, 1937. Tenders were obtained in October, 1937, and the consent of the Minister of Health to the borrowing of a total amount of £7800 was received on 22nd December, 1937. The works were commenced in January, 1938.

The County Council agreed to contribute one-half of the annual expenses in excess of a 1/- special rate on the parish, and the District Council have agreed to make a like contribution.

Ministry of Health Inquiries:

Water Supply - Hewish, West Crewkerne - Inquiry held 4th February, 1937. - Scheme approved as above stated.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal, Tatworth, Chard Parish - Inquiry held 21st March, 1937. - Scheme approved as above stated.

Closet Accommodation:

Number of conservancy closets converted to the water carriage system -

23 closets, providing accommodation for 25 premises.

Scavenging:

A scheme for the regular collection and disposal of House

Refuse from 13 parishes was in course of preparation and was commenced soon after the close of the Year.

SCHOOLS.

The Elementary Schools in the District have been periodically inspected. Several schools were connected to the public water supply during the year, and steps are being taken to increase the number of schools so supplied and also to so improve the flushing system of the sanitary arrangements.

Suspected or confirmed cases of infectious disease among school children are notified to the Medical Officer of Health, who visits the school and when necessary examines the children present and also those who are kept at home for unknown reasons, the particulars being obtained from the school register.

It was not found necessary to close any schools during the year by action of the Local Authority.

Sanitary Inspector's Report:

Number of premises visited during the year -
Primary inspections.....461
Re-inspections.....194
Visits on other sanitary matters, exclusive of
above and also exclusive of housing inspections..725
Reports made on result of inspections..... 80
Number of defects or nuisances remedied..... 79
Number of Informal Notices served in respect of
71 premises..... 67
Number of nuisances remedied as result of Notices. 64

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Meat:

Number of Slaughter-houses in the District..... 26
(a) Licensed..... 11
(b) Registered..... 15

Number of inspections of Slaughter-houses and
Butcher's premises.....,364

Meat condemned during the year:-

<u>Pigs:</u>	Heads 6.	Internal organs 16.	Carcases 1.
<u>Sheep:</u>	Do.	do. 13.	Do. 5.
<u>Oxen:</u>	Heads 5.	Do. do. 34.	Do. 10.

Milk Supply:

Accredited Milk Producers..... 26
Tuberculin Tested Milk Producers..... 5
Producers on Register.....547
Distributors divided as follows:-
(a) Distributors only..... 2
(b) Distributors who are also producers..... 58
Dairies inspected.....187
Do. re-inspected..... 40
Cowstalls subject to alterations and improvement... 25
New Cowstalls erected..... 4

Samples of milk taken and forwarded to the County Laboratory for bacteriological analysis for Tubercle Bacilli.....	30
Samples of milk taken under Milk (Special Designations) Order.....	65

HOUSING.

Number of new houses erected during the year:-

(i) With State Assistance:

- (a) By the local Authority..... 34
- (b) By other bodies or persons.....Nil.

(ii) Otherwise..... 28

Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year:-

1. (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts).....318
- (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose.....389
2. (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under Sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925.....165
- (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose.....229
3. Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation..... 24
4. Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation.....153

Remedy of Defects during the Year without service of formal Notices:-

Number of dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers..... 78

Action under Statutory Powers during the Year:-

A. Proceedings under sections 9 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs.....Nil.
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:
 - (a) By ownersNil.
 - (b) By local authority in default of owners.....Nil.

B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied.....Nil.

- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:
- (a) By owners.....Nil;
- (b) By local authority in default of owners.....Nil.

C. Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made..... 18
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders..... 11

D. Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:

- (1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made.....Nil.
- (2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit.....Nil.

Housing Act, 1936. - Part IV. - Overcrowding:

- (a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year..... 18
- (ii) Number of families dwelling therein..... 18
- (iii) Number of persons dwelling therein.....143
- (b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year.....Nil.
- (c) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year..... 19
- (ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases....127
- (d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding.....Nil.

LIST OF NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS.

Disease.	Total No. of cases notified.	Cases ad- mitted to Isolation Hospital;	Total Deaths.
Smallpox.....	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever.....	11	1	-
Diphtheria.....	-	-	-
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)...	-	-	-
Puerperal Fever.....	-	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia.....	2	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum.....	1	-	-
Cerebro Spinal Meningitis....	-	-	-
Dysentery Sonne'.....	4	-	-
Malaria.....	1	1 (not Isola- -tion Hospital).	-

Carried forward

LIST OF NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES OTHER THAN
TUBERCULOSIS (CONTINUED).

Disease.	Total No. of cases notified.	Cases ad- mitted to Isolation Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Brought forward ..	19	2	-
Pneumonia.....	9	-	10
Acute Poliomyelitis.....	-	-	-
Encephalitis Lethargica.....	-	-	-
Other diseases Locally notifiable - Chickenpox.....	12	-	-
<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>

The case of Malaria occurred in a patient on leave from Africa, and was admitted to Taunton Hospital for treatment.

The number of cases of Pneumonia notified is shown as less than the number of deaths. As Pneumonia so frequently occurs as a terminal condition in fatal cases it is entered in the death certificate as one of the causes of death, and the case is sometimes not notified as a case of Pneumonia.

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL NOTIFIED CASES OF INFECTIOUS
DISEASE IN AGE GROUPS.

Disease.	Y e a r s .										
	Under 1 yr.	1:	2:	3:	4:	5:	10:	15:	20:	35:	45 & over.
Scarlet Fever.....						8.	1.	2.			
Puerperal Pyrexia.....									2.		
Ophthalmia Neonatorum.1.....											
Dysentery Sonne'.....						1.	3.				
Malaria.....										1.	
Pneumonia.....		2.				1.					6.
Chickenpox.....				1.		5.	5.		1.		
<u>Totals</u>	1	2		1		15	9	2	3	1	6

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS.

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.

One case of this disease was notified during the year. I arranged for a special nurse to be provided to treat the case. This nurse was provided by the County Medical Officer. The child made a complete recovery without impairment of vision.

TUBERCULOSIS.

No action has been found necessary under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, or under Section 62 of the Public Health Act, 1925.

The notification of Tuberculosis has been efficiently carried out in the District during the year.

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of the country and the
state of the economy.

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TUBERCULOSIS.
NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1937.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory.		Non- Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non- Respiratory.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 Years	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1- "	.....	.....	.....	1.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
5- "	.....	1.....	1.....	1.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
15- "	..1.....	1.....	1.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1.....
25- "	..1.....	.....	2.....	1.....	1.....	1.....	.....	.....
35- "	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1.....
45- "	..1.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2.....	.....	.....
55- "	.....	1.....	.....	.....	1.....	.....	.....	.....
65- " and up	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
<u>Totals</u>	3	3	4	3	2	3	-	2

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

These have been inspected and found to be in a satisfactory condition.

Inspections made -

Factories.....	10
Workshops.....	24
	<u>34</u>
Defects found.....	7
Defects remedied....	7

I am Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

(sd) C. C. COURT,

Medical Officer of Health,
Chard Rural District Council.

2nd July, 1938.

